

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A hinge device for connecting one member and another member so that the hinge device allows opening and closing, the hinge device comprising:

a movable shaft;

a first bracket non-rotatably fixed to the movable shaft and fixed to the one member;

5 a second bracket rotatably and axially movably installed on the movable shaft and fixed to the another member;

a presser washer; and

a plate spring member formed in a curved configuration, said plate spring member having a projection at a top of the curved configuration of the plate spring member, said
10 projection having a flat surface in contact with the second bracket, and said plate spring member being non-rotatably and axially movably installed on the movable shaft, said second bracket and said plate spring member being pressed against and held in contact with each other via said presser washer and said plate spring member being rotatable relative to said second bracket via rotation of said movable shaft.

2. (Currently Amended) A hinge device for connecting one member and another member so that the hinge device allows opening and closing, the hinge device comprising:

a movable shaft;

a first bracket non-rotatably fixed to the movable shaft and fixed to the one member;

5 a second bracket rotatably and axially movably installed on the movable shaft and fixed

to the another member;

a plate spring member formed in a curved configuration, said plate spring member having a projection at a top of the curved configuration of the plate spring member, said projection having a flat surface in contact with the second bracket, and said plate spring member being non-rotatably and axially movably installed on the movable shaft;

a presser washer; and

a friction member non-rotatably and axially movably installed on the movable shaft, wherein the plate spring member and the friction member are installed so that the plate spring member and the friction member sandwich the second bracket and are pressed against and held in contact with the second bracket via said presser washer and said plate spring member and said friction member are rotatable with respect to said second bracket via rotation of said movable shaft.

3. (Previously Presented) A hinge device according to claim 1, wherein the second bracket, which is pressed against, held in contact, and make the relative rotation with the plate spring member, is provided with one or a plurality of recesses, holes, or cutouts in which the projection of the plate spring member drops, and a tactile feel is generated when the projection of the plate spring member is matched with the recesses, holes, or the cutouts as the second bracket and the plate spring member make relative rotation while pressed against and held in contact with each other.

4. (Previously Presented) A hinge device according to claim 1, wherein one said plate spring member is arranged on one side of said second bracket and another said plate spring member is arranged on another side of said second bracket, said one said plate spring member and said another said plate spring member being non-rotatably and axially movably installed on the movable shaft so that said one said plate spring member and said another said plate spring member sandwich the second bracket from both sides.

5. (Previously Presented) A hinge device according to claim 1, wherein the plate spring member has at the top of the curved configuration of the plate spring member at least two said projections whose surfaces in contact with the second bracket are flat, with areas of the flat surfaces being different from projection to projection.

6. (Previously Presented) A hinge device according to claim 1, wherein the plate spring member is provided with a reinforcing plate spring member stacked on the plate spring member.

7. (Currently Amended) A hinge device for connecting one member and another member so that the hinge device allows opening and closing, the hinge device comprising:

a movable shaft;

a first bracket fixed to the movable shaft and fixed to the one member, wherein said first bracket does not rotate with respect to said movable shaft;

a second bracket fixed to the another member, said second bracket being connected to said shaft, wherein said second bracket is rotatable and axially movable with respect to said shaft;

a presser washer; and

10 a plate spring member, said plate spring member having an outer surface defining at least one projection, said projection having a flat surface, said plate spring member being connected to said movable shaft, said plate spring not being rotatable with respect to said movable shaft, said plate spring member being axially movable on said movable shaft, said second bracket and said plate spring member being pressed against and held in contact with
15 each other via said presser washer, said plate spring member being rotatable relative to said second bracket via rotation of said movable shaft.

8. (Currently Amended) A hinge device according to claim 7, wherein the second bracket comprises one or more recesses, holes, or cutouts, said projection being movable from a first position to a second position, said projection being in contact with [[said]] a surface of said second bracket in said first position, said one or more recesses, holes, or cutouts receiving
5 said projection in said second position.

9. (Previously Presented) A hinge device according to claim 7, wherein said plate spring member is arranged on one side of said second bracket and another plate spring member is arranged on another side of said second bracket, said plate spring member and said another

plate spring member being non-rotatably and axially movably connected to the movable shaft.

10. (Previously Presented) A hinge device according to claim 8, wherein said plate spring member has at least two said projections, each of said at least two said projections having a flat surface, wherein an area of said flat surface of one of said projections is different from an area of said flat surface of another one of said projections, one of said recesses, holes, or cutouts receiving said one of said projections with said one of said projections in said second position, another one of said recesses, holes, or cutouts receiving said another one of said projections with said another one of said projections in said second position.

11. (Previously Presented) A hinge device according to claim 7, wherein said plate spring member is provided with a reinforcing plate spring member stacked on the plate spring member.